

Ecumenical Studies Series

IV

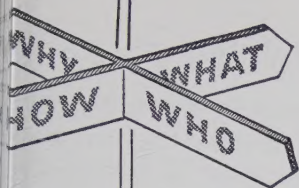
MARCH, 1959

No. 2

CONTENTS

the Pastor and His Associates.....	page 5
What is Ecumenical Study?.....	page 7
Ecumenical Check-Up.....	page 9
I. The Ecumenical Study Commission and the Core Studies	page 16
Schedule of Topics	
Appointing the Commission	
Developing the Study	
Suggested Schedule of Meetings	
Following Through	
II. Ecumenical Studies by Fellowship Groups, Functional Committees, Special Courses.....	page 25
Membership, Worship, Christian Education, Evangelism, World Outreach, Christian Action and Community Service, Stewardship, Finance and Property, Schools of Missions, Adult Church School Electives, Christian Men's Fel- lowship, Christian Women's Fellowship, Leader- ship and Administration	
III. Ecumenical Education in the Congregation as a Whole	page 37
I. Special Studies for Ministerial Associations, Institutes and Retreats	page 45
II. Projects of the Department of Ecumenical Studies, Council on Christian Unity.....	page 49
III. Projects of the World Council of Churches/In- ternational Missionary Council	page 53
I. The 1959 Study "What is the Nature of the Unity We Seek"....	page 55

The Ecumenical Studies Series is an occasional publication of the Council on Christian Unity, bringing to the attention of members and friends significant materials on ecumenical issues. Single copies are distributed to members free of charge. Additional copies are available at cost. Membership is \$3.00 per year. Robert Tobias, editor.



ECUMENICAL STUDIES GUIDE

For Local Churches

By

Robert Heckard and Robert Tobias

What is happening

IN THE THINKING OF FELLOW-CHRISTIANS
AROUND THE WORLD?

WHAT ECUMENICAL CONCERNS

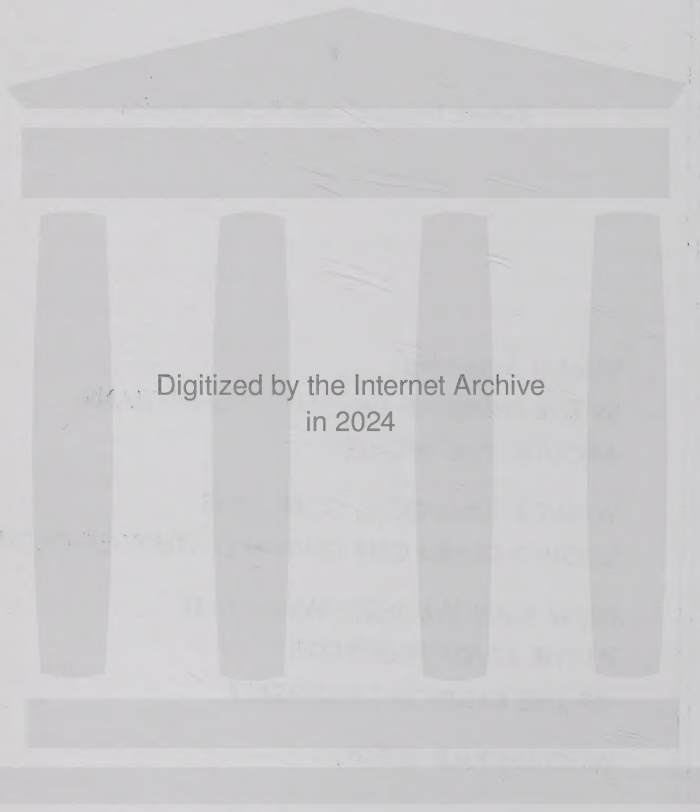
SHOULD CLAIM OUR OWN BEST STUDY EFFORTS?

HOW CAN WE BEST PARTICIPATE

IN THE STUDY PROCESSES

OF THE CHURCH UNIVERSAL?

WHO SHOULD BEGIN?



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2024

TO THE PASTOR AND HIS ASSOCIATES

This *Guide* is addressed first to the pastor in the local church. There are two reasons. One: the world-wide process of ecumenical studies and the fresh kind of encounter between Church and world in our time needs the involvement of *local* churches. Similarly, local congregations need to be actively engaged in the issues and life of the whole Church if they are to represent—indeed, to *be*—the Church where they are. Every local church therefore is urged to engage itself consciously and actively in the process of study and conversation among churches around the world, and between the Church and the world.

The second reason: this guide is addressed to *pastors* of local churches because such study needs to be at a level of idea, experience, and understanding which is possible only with competent theological leadership. This is not to reflect adversely on studies of other subjects, at other levels. But the time has come when concerned ecumenical leadership seeks the theological involvement of local churches, informed by theological competence and broad experience.

These proposed *ecumenical* studies are therefore intended to be depth studies in specific areas of concern to the Church Universal. Broad participation is desirable, but their real value depends upon the local study commission's qualitative approach at every stage: research and exploration, frank and sympathetic encounter with the world, re-thinking our own faith and order, formulation of findings, implementation in church polity, relations, and witness in the community.

The pastor who would lead this kind of study is therefore urged first of all to nurture within his study commission a sense of involvement with the Church Universal in a process of receiving and articulating, in specific situations, the revelation of God, that is, our total faith in life and work.

Responsibilities of the pastor are several: thorough preparation, familiarity with Biblical as well as latest and best materials, responsible direction, follow-through to findings and decisions, reporting to national and world bodies, application in the local com-

munity. Above all, the pastor, if anyone, must be the initiator and guardian of the depth quality.

Finally, not only pastors will be involved. If the special study commission is the *avant-garde* of ecumenical involvements, other groups and the whole congregation must follow shortly thereafter. Therefore, all those with a concern for the deepening of our congregational life and with competence to participate in a study process with the Church Universal—and among these should be some elders, school teachers, members of the Council on Christian Unity—these are urged to take hold of such studies, boldly and with great expectation. It is the whole Church and the whole world which engage us.

WHAT IS ECUMENICAL STUDY?

Ecumenical study is man's intellectual participation in God's continuing self-revelation.

It is the whole community of God's people sharing their knowledge of Him and His will with confidence that they may become receptive to further knowledge of Him in that process.

The *hope* of ecumenical study is the drawing together of all men into one universal, continuous community of the children of God, acknowledging and glorifying Him in all their life. It aims for the realization—here—soon—of that one Church of Christ which—while having many members—is nonetheless really and visibly one body.

The *scope* of ecumenical study includes the issues and problems of concern to the whole Church of Jesus Christ; i.e., the condition of all men and of every man. Therefore, as regards topics of ecumenical study, very little is excluded in principle, but effective study requires focusing on specific issues, one at a time.

The *method* of ecumenical study is friendly and frank encounter between convinced Christians. Requisite to such encounter is confidence in the power of Truth and of the Holy Spirit to move us beyond error, diligent study and preparation, intellectual integrity, the grace to disagree sharply without breaking fellowship, and the will to apply provisional conclusions to the conduct and institutions of our daily living.

The *participants* in ecumenical study are not only the experts, but the whole Church Universal and every member in it. Those with particular experience, with the necessary disciplines and perspectives will, however, need to explore areas where not all can follow. Findings from their explorations must be shared with the whole Church if any are to enter "promised land."

The ecumenical studies program projected herein is divided into three principal parts, each with a particular purpose and involving a particular group or groups in the local church.

Part I deals with "core" or basic ecumenical study. This is for the specialized ecumenical study commission, and is the direct line of participation by the local church in scheduled national and world studies.

Part II suggests ecumenically-related studies for existing groups in the congregation, and involves their specific responsibilities in the local church and community. Some of these studies are probably already under way in functional departments and committees.

Part III consists of more general suggestions for the involvement of the total congregation in a process of ecumenical education.

The appendices provide supplementary data concerning the larger world context of which local church studies are a part.

Supplement No. 1 gives specific material for use with the core study for the year 1959 on the topic "The Nature of the Unity We Seek."

AN ECUMENICAL CHECK-UP

Before launching the Ecumenical Studies Commission, check the present ecumenical involvement of the congregation against this list.* This may well indicate other action which should be taken simultaneously with the studies program.

HOW ECUMENICAL IS OUR CHURCH?

on its Awareness?

	Yes	No
1. Does our congregation receive regular information (through church bulletins, news announcements, sermons, classes and study groups)—		
a) about the situation of Christians around the world?	—	—
b) about current ecumenical issues and problems?	—	—
c) about current endeavors for Christian unity?	—	—
d) about the involvement of Disciples in the ecumenical movement?	—	—
e) about significant developments in the life of other churches in other lands?	—	—
2. Has our congregation been informed (through speakers, films, flyers and literature) about the organization and work of		
a) the National Council of Churches?	—	—
b) the World Council of Churches?	—	—
c) the Council on Christian Unity?	—	—
d) our own local council of churches?	—	—
3. Does our congregation know how it is related organizationally to		
a) the National Council of Churches?	—	—
b) the World Council of Churches?	—	—
c) the Council on Christian Unity?	—	—
d) our own local council of churches?	—	—
4. Does our congregation know what other communions are represented in our community?	—	—

* Off-prints available, Council on Christian Unity, 25c doz.

In its Worship?

Yes No

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| 5. Do we use in our regular worship services | | |
| a) prayers and orders of worship from various traditions? | — | — |
| b) hymns and special music from various traditions? | — | — |
| 6. Does our minister preach sermons on | | |
| a) the oneness of the Church? | — | — |
| b) issues and problems in Christian unity? | — | — |
| c) great concerns of the whole Church? | — | — |
| d) the life and work of churches in other parts of the world? | — | — |
| 7. Do we use ecumenical symbols and art in our church architecture and decoration? | — | — |
| 8. Do we help plan and participate in united services on special occasions? | — | — |
| 9. Do we have exchanges of preachers with other denominations? | — | — |
| 10. Do we participate in the observance of special days? | | |
| a) World-Wide Communion Sunday? | — | — |
| b) World Order Sunday? | — | — |
| c) Reformation Sunday? | — | — |
| d) Week of Prayer for Christian Unity? | — | — |
| e) Race Relations Sunday? | — | — |
| f) World Mission Sunday? | — | — |
| g) Pentecost Sunday? | — | — |
| 11. Do we in our prayer life lift to the throne of Grace the sufferings and joys of all the Church and all men? | — | — |
| 12. Do we as a worshipping congregation penitently confess and seek pardon for our share in the sin of division and intercede regularly for the unity of the Church? | — | — |

In its Study?

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| 13. Do all our members have opportunity to study ecumenical issues in some group? | — | — |
| Regular Sunday church school classes; | | |
| Elective study courses for leaders' training; | | |
| Fellowship meetings and retreats of youth, men, women; | | |
| Summer conferences (adult, family, youth; Dis- | | |

ciple and inter-denominational) ;

City or area-wide inter-denominational groups of
selected church officers and laity;

Special groups called together specifically for ecumenical studies.

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| 4. Do we participate in the ecumenical study program of | | |
| a) the Council on Christian Unity? | — | — |
| b) the National and World Councils of Churches? | — | — |
| c) our own local council of churches? | — | — |
| 5. Do we study the beliefs and practices of churches other than our own? | — | — |
| 6. Does our library include basic books and materials on Christian unity? | — | — |
| 7. Do we study the current problems of the church and the world? | — | — |
| 8. Have we (in classes, in fellowship groups, in sermons, or in special study groups) re-considered the origin, "plea," and mission of our Brotherhood in the light of the present ecumenical situation? | — | — |
| 9. Do we stimulate the members of our congregation to initiate inter-church or inter-denominational study groups? | — | — |
| 10. Do we develop ecumenically-minded leaders for both our own church and for inter-denominational groups? | — | — |
| 11. Do we analyze our own organization, program and life to see if we are adequately manifesting the oneness of the Church Universal? | — | — |
| 12. Do we study to find ways of solving our own problems of relationships with other churches and the community? | — | — |
| 13. Do we continually seek new ways of growing in oneness with other churches? | — | — |

In its Fellowship?

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| 24. Do we have exchange visits with neighboring churches for worship, special services and social events? | — | — |
| 25. Do we share tradition, beliefs, and customs with other communions through joint studies, films, etc.? | — | — |
| 26. Do we participate in the fellowship and common endeavors of our local council of churches? | — | — |

	Yes	No
27. Do our youth, men, and women participate in their respective local councils?	—	—
28. Do we undertake community work projects?	—	—
29. Do we participate in city-wide inter-denominational fellowship meetings?	—	—
30. Are we doing all we can to develop closer fellowship and mutual aid with neighboring churches?	—	—
31. Do we seek to develop a community-wide sense of common membership in the Church Universal?	—	—

In its Service?

32. Have we surveyed the needs of our community in order to determine how we can better minister to it?	—	—
33. Do we undertake special service projects such as:		
a) collecting clothing and relief goods to send overseas?	—	—
b) providing homes and work for refugees?	—	—
34. Do we serve the community with our facilities?	—	—
35. Do we give adequate financial support to		
a) our local council of churches?	—	—
b) the National Council of Churches?	—	—
c) the World Council of Churches?	—	—
36. Do we participate in the Week of Compassion?	—	—
37. Do we give our youth opportunity to know about and share in ecumenical work camps?	—	—
38. Do we assist neighboring churches whenever and in whatever ways possible?	—	—
39. Do we show hospitality to foreign students in our community?	—	—
40. Are we helping to prepare youth for leadership in the Church Universal?	—	—

In its Organization?

41. Do we have a person or committee with particular competence which has responsibility for ecumenical concerns?	—	—
42. Do we have someone who has liaison responsibility for our ecumenical involvement (pastor, committee chairman, other)?	—	—
43. Is our responsible liaison a member of the Council on Christian Unity and does he receive its materials?	—	—

	Yes	No
44. Do we have an effective council or federation of churches in our community?	—	—
45. Is provision made for our congregation to receive reports from our representatives to the		
a) Council of Churches?	—	—
b) Council of Churchwomen?	—	—
c) Council of Churchmen?	—	—
d) Christian Youth Council?	—	—

In its Basic Attitudes?

46. Do we regard our mission work as in and for the whole Church in the whole world?	—	—
47. Do we recognize membership in our congregation as membership in the Church Universal?	—	—
48. Do new members sense that they become part of the Church Universal in becoming members of our congregation?	—	—
49. Do we recognize Christians in other Protestant communions as members of the Church Universal and accept them as such in our fellowship?	—	—
50. Do we eagerly include in our fellowship those claimed by Christ regardless of race, nationality, and social, educational or economic status?	—	—
51. Do we have an ecumenical attitude and concern in the total life of our congregation?	—	—

(Adapted from Year of Emphasis Manual, 1958-59)

PART I

The Ecumenical Study Commission and The Core Studies

SCHEDULE OF TOPICS FOR ECUMENICAL STUDY COMMISSIONS

As significant issues develop in the ecumenical movement, the Council on Christian Unity will attempt to prepare necessary materials for study by local commissions. Normally, not more than one specific ecumenical issue selected from a score or more under consideration on a world-wide basis will be projected as the *core* or *basic* study each year. In some years, however, studies will be selected with particular reference to issues Disciples are facing or on which our decision is required.

Two considerations will be borne in mind in scheduling specific topics for study: 1) the need for planning far enough in advance for the preparation of study materials and equipment, and 2) the need for sufficient flexibility to deal with serious issues as they arise.

In the following list of core studies, the first topic is definite and is getting underway. The others are suggested tentatively, and will need consideration and confirmation in the years prior to implementation.

1958-59—The Nature of the Unity We Seek (See Supplement I of this *Guide*).

Basic materials: George L. Hunt, *A Guide to Christian Unity*, Bethany Press.

Issues In Unity (Robert Tobias, editor), Council on Christian Unity.

Special dates: Area Unity Consultations on seminary and college campuses (For schedule, see *Issues In Unity*).

1959-60—Steps Toward One Church

Basic materials: findings of Area Unity Consultations.

Special dates: possibly an international consultation of Disciple leaders

1960-61—Jesus Christ As Light of the World

Basic materials: preparatory studies for the Third Assembly of the World Council of Churches.

"Lordship" studies of the Curriculum Planning Council.

Findings of Disciples' Study Commission on Rapid Social Change.

Special meetings: preparatory to the Third Assembly.

1961-62—The United Church of Christ in North America

Basic materials: *Studies in Five Streams of Church Life* — Evangelical, Reformed, Congregational, Christian, Disciples.

The Basis of Union of the United Church of Christ in the U. S. A.

Special activities: with groups from the United Church of Christ.

1962-63—Theology of Missions

Basic materials: from World Council of Churches' and Disciples' study commissions on "The Theology of Missions."

In addition to the *core* study some commissions may want to take on other subjects in the total ecumenical study program or of special concern in the local situation. The Council will be glad to lend any assistance it can for such studies.

APPOINTING THE COMMISSION

Who appoints?

Official Board,
Cabinet,
or pastor.

The Board may want to be involved in the appointment of the Commission as an official body. Or the Cabinet may want to name the study group as its exploratory and consultative agent. Or the pastor may simply call the group together informally to begin study on a vital issue. At the outset, the question of who appoints and whether the Commission has an official status is less important than that it be able to do serious study, with competence, freedom and integrity. Eventual channels for reporting to the congregation, for decision-taking and for follow-up should, however, be considered in relation to the appointment of the Commission.

Who should be appointed?

The purpose of the Commission and the range of studies will help determine the kinds of persons needed on the Commission.

Purpose:

1. Depth study in ecumenical relations and the theological issues therein.
2. Channeling of ecumenical information and study materials to appropriate functional groups.
3. Involvement of the congregation in all ways possible in the Church Universal.

Range:

1. From fine theological points to very practical aspects of the relation of Christians to one another and to the world.
2. From the church across the street to the church in the Antipodes.

The total task of the Commission then needs the following persons or faculties:

1. The pastor;
2. A representative of the congregation's decision-taking body, e.g. the chairman of the Board;
3. The congregation's representatives on local ecumenical bodies;
4. A correspondent to keep abreast of materials and secure copies for the Commission;
5. A Christian educator;
6. One knowledgeable in Disciples' heritage and general history;
7. One knowledgeable in positions and practices of other communions;
8. One familiar with world affairs, possibly representing the Outreach Committee;
9. If not included above, "study representatives" of the fellowship groups;
10. Representatives of selected functional departments.

Some studies will have specific implications for functional departments, which may well be brought into specific studies in the beginning stages.

More than fifteen participants may prove too many, and less than eight too few for effective work.

Members of the Commission should be willing and able to take time to

Read

Reflect

Discuss

Interpret

Act.

DEVELOPING THE STUDY—A SUGGESTED PROCEDURE

- Secure materials.

Basic working materials are listed in the supplement for the annual core study. Copies should be readily accessible to all members of the Commission. Commissions interested in working on other topics should ascertain what materials may be available, what kind of competence is required and whether available locally or can be developed, what kind of decision, action or report may eventually be involved.

- Define major issues.

Members of the Commission can probably do most creative work if at the first session the pastor describes the reason for the study in its broader context, delineates major issues in a preliminary way, describes how such issues are crucial to the congregation and community, and suggests some areas in which the Commission should seek conclusions.

- Study general materials.

With the pastor's specific questions in mind members should read through general materials on the subject. Members may then find it necessary to re-define the key issues and the specific areas for the Commission's work before proceeding into detailed research.

- Assign areas for research.

Best research will be done by individuals or smaller work teams. In assigning areas, some common mind should also be reached as to the way research findings should be organized for

consideration by the Commission as a whole. "Draft statements" written by smaller teams or individuals and revised by the larger group have proved a very fruitful method at this stage of the ecumenical study process.

- Consider draft statements of findings.

The substance of reports of individuals and work teams should be considered carefully by the Commission. It is not unusual to find that preliminary reports will lead into other and often unexpected areas of study before conclusions can be drawn.

- Draft the Commission's statement.

This may take the form of a collection of the documents from the work teams or of a common study guide, or of a series of propositions, or of questions and answers, or of specific recommendations. It may be addressed principally to the local congregation, to the local community, the Brotherhood, the Church Universal, or the world at large. If possible, it should describe points of agreement and disagreement, further areas to be explored, recommended action by appropriate groups.

- Report findings.

Thoroughgoing study will have implications at many levels in the life of the Church Universal. Therefore, the Commission's findings and recommendations should be channeled to appropriate bodies in the local church (pastor, cabinet, board, functional departments), to appropriate bodies in the community (council, neighboring churches, civic organizations), to the Brotherhood (Council on Christian Unity and other agencies) and thence to national and world bodies.

Normally the Commission can make its best contribution in study and call upon functional departments and other appropriate bodies to initiate action. It may, however, need to initiate action in some areas.

- Develop contacts.

Similar study groups may exist in neighboring churches of other communions. Possibilities for sharing reports, for joint studies and common action should be explored.

SUGGESTED SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS

Adequate consideration of core studies will require from 6-10 sessions of 2-3 hours each. Between sessions time must be allowed for members to do research, to reflect and to draft statements.

1st Session:

Clarify purpose of Commission.

Select scribe.

Delineate major issues.

Request additional materials needed.

2nd Session:

Discuss materials.

Distribute basic materials.

Define specific issues.

Assign areas of research.

Determine method of research and organization of findings.

3rd Session:

Consider research findings in 1 or 2 areas.

4th Session:

Further research findings.

5th Session:

Further research findings and possible consideration of unexpected issues.

Appoint drafting group for Commission's statement.

6th Session:

Consider draft statement of Commission.

7th Session:

Possible enlarged or open session to present recommendations, consider follow-up.

FOLLOWING THROUGH

Effective follow-up will require the Commission's attention at three levels:

- I. In the local congregation and community.
Recommendations, whether for further study, for Board decisions, for community action, or whatever, should be in specific terms and with responsibilities clearly located.
- II. In the Commission itself.
The work of ecumenical study has just begun when the first report is written. The Commission will need to follow-up its conclusions with interpretation, help implement approved recommendations, and be prepared to undertake further and unexpected studies and action stimulated by the study.
- III. In the Brotherhood and the Church at large.
The Commission should feed its findings to the national and world study programs. The following guide points should be borne in mind. The annual supplement for core studies may suggest fuller details. Reports should be sent to the Council on Christian Unity, 222 South Downey Avenue, Indianapolis 7, Indiana.
 1. Church: name, location, size.
 2. Members of Commission: names, professions, representing.
 3. How was study initiated?
 4. Number of sessions.
 5. Topic.
 6. Main issues and sub-topics, research assignments.
 7. General conclusions on topic.
 8. Basic agreements.
 9. Disagreements.
 10. Areas needing further study.
 11. Specific recommendations and to whom addressed.
 12. Likely follow-up.
 13. Pastor's evaluation.
 14. Attach Commission statements where possible.

PART II

Ecumenical Studies
by
Fellowship Groups
Functional Committees
and
Special Courses

In addition to the work of the specialized Ecumenical Studies Commission, the congregation should also be involved in ecumenical studies through its regular fellowship groups and classes, through special educational programs, and the work of the functional committees. Here is where specialized survey and study can best be related to the church's impact in the local community.

THE FUNCTIONAL COMMITTEES AND DEPARTMENTS

Congregations increasingly are re-organizing on the "functional pattern," with areas of specific responsibility assigned to committees on membership, worship, education, evangelism, world outreach, action and service, stewardship, and property. These committees or departments should take the initiative for involving the congregation in depth studies in their areas of responsibility. This might be done

- a. by the functional committee serving as a nucleus for such a study, coopting other persons who should be involved;
- b. by proposing topics and providing materials for a study program sponsored by fellowship groups or classes;
- c. by calling for special study, whether by the board, the cabinet, or together with neighboring churches, as may be appropriate to the local situation.

Materials produced by Faith and Order and other ecumenical bodies should be helpful in initiating the study and introducing the local church to an exciting conversation with the world-wide Christian community.

Here are some starter questions and materials:

- Committee on Membership:
 1. What does it mean to be "members" of the Body of Christ?
 2. What and how is the Body of Christ constituted?
 3. How are "members" added thereto?
 4. What is the relation between the church's roll book and the Body of Christ?
 5. Does our congregation recognize membership in our congregation as membership in the Church Universal?
 6. Do new members sense that they become part of the Church Universal in becoming members of this congregation?

7. Do we recognize Christians in other Protestant communions as members of the Church Universal and accept them as such in our fellowship and its mission?
8. Do we eagerly include in our fellowship those claimed by Christ regardless of race, nationality, and social, educational, or economic status?
9. On what grounds do we include or exclude?
10. On what grounds do we believe Christ includes or excludes?

Study materials:

Newbigin, Lesslie, *The Household of God*, Friendship Press, New York, 1954, 177 p., \$2.75.

Brunner, Emil, *The Misunderstanding of the Church*, Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1953, 132 p., \$2.50.

• Committee on Worship:

1. What does the congregation understand the purpose of worship to be?
2. In what sense is "fellowship" important and in what sense immaterial to worship?
3. In some churches attention is given to creating an atmosphere in which the participant can "get the most out of worship." How important is "atmosphere?" What does this imply about one's understanding of the meaning of worship?
4. In what respects can the Church when broken in fragments engage in worship and in what sense not?
5. What can be done in our church to involve us in worship as the Church Universal?
6. What symbols (architecture, music, paintings, liturgies) might be introduced to give us a sense of participation in the whole Church?
7. What leadership can we give in our community towards a deeper understanding of our oneness before God—in worship, work and service?
8. Is our practice of worship such that visitors may feel they have worshipped Almighty God with us in the Church Universal?
9. Are there barriers for which we are responsible which prevent visitors from participation in the Lord's Supper?

10. How do we as a church penitently confess and seek pardon for our part in the sin of division and intercede regularly for the unity of the Church.

Study materials:

Ways and Meaning of Worship, A Faith and Order Study, with selected bibliography, New York, World Council of Churches, March, 1957.

Ways of Worship, Faith and Order Commission Report, New York, Harper and Brothers, 1951, 362 p.

• Committee on Christian Education:

1. Does our church think of education essentially as the cultivation of ethical habits? as transmission of information? as indoctrination with religious beliefs? as articulation of one's faith?
2. What should the Church Universal expect of an "educational" program?
3. In how far should Christian education create a sense of oneness with all men and how far a sense of difference?
4. What do we understand is the relationship between Christian education and the working of the Holy Spirit?
5. Does the educational program of our church make us knowledgeable about beliefs and practices of fellow Christians and of non-Christians?
6. Does our educational program suggest criteria for fruitful encounter and negotiation with others—both Christian and non-Christian?
7. Does the church school program provide participants with opportunity to share their faith with others?
What others?
8. Does our educational program help us articulate our own faith in terms comprehensible by those among whom we work and travel?

Study materials:

Cully, Iris V., *The Dynamics of Christian Education*, Philadelphia, Westminster Press, 1958, 205 p., \$3.75.

• Committee on Evangelism:

1. What authority do we have for "intruding" into other people's lives with our faith?
2. What is the urgency of evangelism in relation to our community and to individuals in it?

3. Is there any evangelism or salvation apart from the Church? from the *whole* Church?
4. If Christ is the evangelist, what does this mean for our methods and purposes?
5. What methods of "successful" evangelism should not be used because they are incongruous with the Gospel?
6. What changes in the structure of church life are required by the task of evangelism today?
7. What new relations with neighboring churches are demanded by our common evangelistic calling?
8. How does evangelism involve us beyond persons of our own community, class, race or creed?

Study materials:

Theology for Evangelism, World Council of Churches, Division of Studies document, mimeographed, 27 p., New York, 1958.

The Good News of God, (a report on the need, nature and purpose of evangelism for contemporary America), National Council of Churches, New York, 1958, 23 p.

This committee might also want to consider a series of studies on evangelism in several parts of the world. Materials are available on evangelism in France, Holland, Germany, India and Great Britain.

• Committee on World Outreach:

1. What is our understanding of the meaning of the *world* in which we live?
2. What is meant by "The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof?"
3. To what extent do we consider "church work" as holier than other work?
4. What is the mission of the church—ministers and laity—towards the world?
5. What kind of thrust or goal ought to impel us in our work and witness?
6. What is the scope of our church's present work in the world?
7. What *should* determine the boundaries of that program?
8. What do we understand to be the reason for our missions program overseas?

9. Are these adequate in view of the Gospel and our present world situation?
10. Does *our* mission include support for the ministry and needs of the Church Universal as represented abroad in united churches, Orthodox Churches, and other non-Disciple churches?

Study materials:

Laity: Towards a New Christian Style of Life?, New York, World Council of Churches, Bulletin of the Department on the Laity, No. 5, June, 1958, 44 p.

The Calling of the Church—To Mission and to Unity, New York, World Council of Churches, Central Committee, August, 1951, 8 p.

Calhoun, R. L., *God and the Day's Work*, Association Press (Reflection Books), New York, 1958, 50c.

• Committee on Christian Action and Community Service:

1. What does it mean for our community "to live in God's world?"
2. What hopes have we as Christians for our community?
3. What purposes in fact determine the service program of our church?
4. How far is our church involved in political, economic and social problems of our community?
5. How do we keep our congregation informed and active in these involvements?
6. Are we making known the mercy and love and judgment of God in our action and service program?
7. How does our present program of action and service measure up to what we believe it should be (Week of Compassion, refugees, relief, work campers, student aid, Christian thought on current issues, etc.)?
8. To what extent is our action in the community conducted with other churches and for the whole Church?
9. How do we show our oneness with churches abroad in their involvements?
10. What new structures are required in our community if the whole Church is to carry out its ministry and witness?

Study materials:

Ecumenical Documents on Church and Society, 1925-1953, Geneva, World Council of Churches, 1954.

Social Progress (Special issue on Rapid Social Change), February, 1958, Presbyterian Board of Social Education, Philadelphia.

Niebuhr, Reinhold, and Cowan, W. A., *What the Christian Hopes for in Society*, N. Y., Association Press, 1957, 125 p. (Reflection Books, 50c).

• Stewardship, Finance and Property:

1. What does it mean in the Scriptures that we are "co-Lords" and "co-laborers" with God for the fulfilment of creation?
2. What are the meanings of "property" to the secular businessman? to the Russian economist? to the Hindu? to the Church?
3. What essential difference does being a Christian make to one's understanding of created "matter"?
4. How does this affect one's understanding of his work and the meaning of life?
5. How should fellow-Christians share their responsibility for "co-Lordship" and "co-laboring?"
6. Do we so share through our own church and ecumenical structures? How, exactly?
7. What are the criteria by which we decide methods and quantities in sharing?
8. Who all is included in both giving and receiving?
9. Do others see that what God has given us in trust is also for their use: our church's buildings, our money, our services, our property?

Study materials:

The Meaning of Work, Geneva, World Council of Churches, Department on the Laity.

Lordship of Christ Over the World and the Church, Documents for Ecumenical Study, Geneva, World Council of Churches, 1957, 48 p.

SPECIAL GROUPS AND ELECTIVES

Helpful suggestions and special materials have been prepared as indicated for the following groups.

- Bible Study Groups:

Basic Materials:

Rupert E. Davies, *The Bible and Unity* (Six Bible studies with questions for discussion), London, British Council of Churches, 10 Eaton Gate, 1957, 14 p.

E. Lyall Williams, *A Biblical Approach to Unity*, Melbourne, Australia, Austral Pub. Co., 1957, 190 p., 15s.

- Schools of Missions:

Course on Disciples and Christian Unity.

Basic materials:

H. E. Short, *Christian Unity Is Our Business*, Bethany Press, St. Louis, 1953, 59 p.

Thomas Campbell, *Declaration and Address*, (bound with *Last Will and Testament*, Stone, Barton W. and others), St. Louis, Bethany Press, 1955, pp. 23-114.

Grace Douglas Orr, *A Layman's Guide to Ecumenicity*, 100 p.

Write: Missionary Education Department, United Christian Missionary Society, 222 South Downey Avenue, Indianapolis 7, Indiana.

See also *Issues in Unity*, Council on Christian Unity, 222 South Downey Avenue, Indianapolis 7, Indiana.

- Christian Men's Fellowship:

"Ecumenical Concerns and Christian Unity."

Materials available, Department of Men's Work, United Christian Missionary Society, 222 South Downey Avenue, Indianapolis 7, Indiana.

See also "Wider Relationships," Chapter X of *The Why and How of Men's Work*, same address.

Laity, Bulletin on the Department of the Laity (occasional), World Council of Churches, Geneva.

- **Christian Women's Fellowship:**
 "Women in the Ecumenical Church."
 Initial materials distributed, Department of Christian Women's Fellowship, United Christian Missionary Society, 222 South Downey Avenue, Indianapolis 7, Indiana.
World Consultation Reports and Bulletins, Department on the Cooperation of Men and Women in Society, World Council of Churches, Geneva.
- **Chi Rho Fellowship**
 PM Pack No. 9, St. Louis, Christian Board of Publication, 1955.
 Leaflet No. 15, "The Church Is Universal."
- **Christian Youth Fellowship**
Fellowship No. 1, Roy L. Henthorne, Editor, St. Louis, Christian Board of Publication, 1952.
 Three sessions on "Knowing Other Communions."
 1) "How It All Started," p. 79
 2) "Protestantism Today," p. 83
 3) "The More We Get Together," p. 87.
Fellowship No. 2, Sherman R. Hanson, Editor, St. Louis, Christian Board of Publication, 1953.
 Session on "I Believe in the Church," p. 85.
Fellowship No. 4, Sherman R. Hanson, Editor, St. Louis, Christian Board of Publication, 1955.
 Two sessions on "Our Neighbor Churches."
 1) "Why We Are Different," p. 175.
 2) "How We Are Alike," p. 179.
Fellowship No. 5, Sherman R. Hanson, Editor, St. Louis, Christian Board of Publication, 1956.
 Two sessions on "The World Council of Churches."
 1) "What the Council Is," p. 87.
 2) "What the Council Does," p. 91.
Fellowship No. 7, Sherman R. Hanson, Editor, St. Louis, Christian Board of Publication, 1958.
 Four sessions on "Knowing Our Christian Neighbors."
 1) "Meet the Presbyterian Family," p. 37.
 2) "Meet the Congregational Family," p. 91.
 3) "Meet the Episcopal Family," p. 95.
 4) "All Together," p. 99.

ECUMENICAL EMPHASES IN LEADERSHIP AND ADMINISTRATION

COURSE 131b. "The Church Through the Centuries."

This course deals with the origin and growth of the Christian church. The ideals and accomplishments of the Protestant church and its leaders are surveyed, and a study is made of the contribution which the church can make today. Because the field of this course is so wide it may be found desirable to build the course largely around some period of church history or around some of the outstanding leaders such as Paul or Luther. In such cases, of course, any book appropriate to the field considered may be substituted for the text recommended for the general course.

Recommended Text Material

Batten, J. M., *Protestant Backgrounds in History*, \$1.00.
Bowie, W. R., *Story of the Church*, \$2.95, an almost indispensable resource. Leader's Guide, 25 cents.

COURSE 134b. "Our World Christian Fellowship."

The background and development of the modern movement toward ecumenicity are studied, together with a consideration of some of the motives and undergirding principles and their implications for the local church and community.

Recommended Text Material

Orr, G. D., *A Layman's Guide to Ecumenicity*, \$1.00, together with G. K. A. Bell, *The Kingship of Christ*, 50 cents. Leader's Guide, 30 cents (combined with 134a). In Disciple schools, a valuable resource is Short, H. E., *Christian Unity is Our Business*, 50 cents.

COURSE 151b. "The Christian World Mission."

To help leaders understand and interpret the world mission of the church. The course deals with the biblical charter for the world mission of the church. It shows how the church has sought to minister to peoples of different cultures and stages of development. It gives major attention to the contribution of missions in the present world political situation, the rise of the indigenous church, and the current unprecedented challenge of Christian work at home and abroad.

Recommended Text Material

Ranson, C., *That the World May Know*, paper \$1.25, cloth \$2.00.
Leader's Guide, 50 cents (combined with 151a).

(For full listing of courses in Leadership and Administration see *Leadership Education Bulletin*, 1958-59, Christian Board of Publication, St. Louis.)

PART III

Ideas for Ecumenical Education in The Congregation as a Whole

GOALS

Ideally, ecumenical education should seek to achieve the following goals:

1. Keep the congregation well informed—
 - a) about the situation of Christians around the world;
 - b) about the work of local, national and world councils of churches and other ecumenical organizations and agencies;
 - c) about current ecumenical issues and problems;
 - d) about current endeavors for Christian union;
 - e) about the involvement of Disciples in the ecumenical movement;
 - f) about significant developments in the life of other churches in other lands.
2. Involve every member of the congregation in some ecumenical study each year;
3. Develop an ecumenical attitude and concern in the total life of the congregation;
4. Relate specialized ecumenical study to all phases of church life;
5. Stimulate laymen to initiate inter-church or inter-denominational study groups;
6. Develop ecumenically-minded leaders for both its own church and for inter-denominational groups;
7. Encourage support of ecumenical concerns;
8. Encourage laymen to deal with the basic questions of faith at a profound level;
9. Help the members to become well informed about the beliefs and practices of different denominations, including their own;
10. Help every member face his responsibility for the divided state of the Church and for achieving its oneness;
11. Help that particular church to discover its share in the sin of division and to find possible ways of eliminating barriers to a fuller oneness;
12. Help that church find solutions to its own problem of relationships with other churches and the community;
13. Continually encourage that church to seek new ways of growing in oneness with other churches;

14. Instill such a sense of oneness that all important decisions of the local church are taken with the conviction that they are taken for the Church Universal.

PROJECTS

These projects are suggested for assignment to working groups or individuals in the congregation.

1. Ecumenical evaluation project:

Review and evaluate every aspect of the church's program, together with responsible officers and committees, and prepare a report for the Board or congregation on the "ecumenical health" of the church. The "ecumenical check-up" listed on page 9 may help get started, but more detailed attention will need to be given to ecumenical content and attitudes at every level of church life.

2. Ecumenical news projects:

See that important news of the Church Universal, and of our church's involvement, is announced in the church paper, church bulletin boards, appropriate classes and fellowship groups, special news sheets, local papers. Provide background materials on special problems to study and working groups.

3. Ecumenical information project:

Provide books and journals (*Ecumenical Press Service*, *Ecumenical Review*, *National Council Outlook*, *Christian Unity Newsletter*) in the church's library and reading room. For a well selected listing of books write for the "Ecumenical Bookshelf" and "Together" from the Council on Christian Unity. Total annual cost of minimal library and subscriptions, about \$40-\$50.

4. Distribute free ecumenical literature to members of the congregation, and *Unity Packet* at cost (50c) to teachers, officers, staff. Materials available from Council on Christian Unity.

5. Invite speakers from other communions for special fellowship and study programs, for preaching and church school classes.

6. Preach from Biblical texts on the unity theme.

See *Preaching on Christian Unity*, Robert Tobias, ed., St. Louis, Bethany Press, 1958, 160 p., \$3.00, for a variety of types of sermons on this theme.

7. Visit other communions and ask their leaders to explain their symbols, traditions, practices, beliefs.
8. Plan joint meeting of fellowship groups with those of other communions to study a problem of common interest, or to do some work project together.
9. Plan an adult educational program series on some special problem of Christian unity.
10. Appoint some specific person to serve as liaison with the Council on Christian Unity, and to receive ecumenical literature for the congregation.
11. See that the church's representatives to the local councils report back to the congregation, in general assembly, worship or fellowship nights.
12. Ask tourists from abroad to report on the life and concerns of Christians they have known.
13. Plan and finance a student exchange at high school or college level. Write the Department of Social Welfare, United Christian Missionary Society, for details.
14. Adopt a refugee family. Write the Department of Social Welfare for details.
15. Celebrate some special feast days of other churches, Orthodox for example, with speakers or films describing their way of life.
16. Conduct a survey of opinions on unity in the congregation, or together with other churches. Use the questionnaire from the 1959 Ecumenical Study Supplement as starting point.
17. Send delegates to larger study conferences of state and national councils.
18. Have an all-church showing of "Christian Unity—Mission Begun, A Progress Report," and other ecumenical films.
19. Encourage a youth group or an interest group to present an ecumenical play or drama for the whole church.
20. Encourage capable young people in the church to participate in ecumenical work camps and training conferences.

(For suggestions of films, film strips, dramas and music see the 1958-59 *Year of Emphasis Manual*, pp. 34-35. Available, Christian Board of Publication, St. Louis, 50c.)

APPENDICES

Appendix I

SPECIAL STUDIES
For
MINISTERIAL ASSOCIATIONS
INSTITUTES AND RETREATS

SUGGESTED ISSUES AND STARTING MATERIALS

- The Minister's Responsibility for the Disunity and Unity of the Church.
C. H. Dodd and others, *More Than Doctrine Divides the Churches*, New York, World Council of Churches, 1952, 35 p.
See also Walter Muelder's address "Institutionalism in Relation to Unity and Disunity," in *The Nature of the Unity We Seek*, Report on the North American Conference on Faith and Order, St. Louis, Bethany Press, 1958, 304 p.
Kerr, H. T., *What Divides Protestants Today*, New York, Association Press, 1958, 127 p. (Reflection Books, 50c).
- Church Membership, Proselytism, Witness and Evangelism.
World Council of Churches, "Christian Witness, Proselytism and Religious Liberty," (WCC Central Committee Minutes, 1956) New York.
Anderson, Wilhelm, *Towards a Theology of Missions*, London, SCM Press Ltd., 1955, 64 p.
- Ecclesiological Significance of Councils of Churches.
World Council of Churches, Central Committee Minutes, "The Church, The Churches and the World Council of Churches," Toronto, 1950.
Thils, Gustav, *L'Histoire Doctrinale du Mouvement Oecuménique*, Louvain, France, E. Warny Press.
- The Nature of the Church and the Sacrament of Baptism.
Church of Scotland, *Interim Report of the Special Commission on Baptism*, Nos. 1 and 2, Edinburgh.
Barth, Karl, *The Teaching of the Church Regarding Baptism*, London, SCM Press Ltd., 1956, 64 p.

- **The Nature of Unity: Organic or "Spiritual"?**
 Garrison, W. E., *The Quest and Character of a United Church*, Nashville, Abingdon Press, 1957, 238 p.
 Dillistone, F. W., *The Structure of the Divine Society*, Philadelphia, Westminster Press, 1951, 263 p.
 Minear, Paul S., ed., *The Nature of the Unity We Seek*, Official Report of the North American Conference on Faith and Order, St. Louis, Bethany Press, 1957, 304 p.
- **The Church's Authority: Revelation, Scripture, or Tradition?**
 Outler, A. C., *Christian Tradition and the Unity We Seek*, Oxford University Press, 1955, 165 p.
 Richardson and Schweitzer, eds., *Biblical Authority for the Church's Social and Political Message Today*, World Council of Churches' Symposium, Geneva.
 "Scripture and Tradition," *Scottish Journal of Theology*, June 1953, pp. 113-35.
- **Toward One Church in Our Town.**
 Douglass, H. P., *Church Comity*, New York, Harper, 1929, 181 p.
 Newbigin, Lesslie, *One Body, One Gospel, One World*, International Missionary Council, 1958, 56 p.
 National Council of Churches, *Growing Together*, New York, 1955, 123 p.
 Miller, J. Q., *Christian Unity: Its Relevance to the Community*, Strasburg, Shenandoah Publishing House, 1957, 122 p.
 Newbigin, Lesslie, *The Household of God*, New York, Friendship Press, 1954, 177 p.
- **The "Greenwich Plan" for a United Church in the USA.**
Ecumenical Studies Series, Vol. III, No. 2, Indianapolis, Council on Christian Unity, July, 1957, 78 p.
- **Disciple Relations with Churches in Europe.**
Ecumenical Studies Series, Vol. III, No. 4, Indianapolis, Council on Christian Unity, January, 1958, 41 p.

OTHER TOPICS

For lay and ministerial groups who want to venture on their own. Materials listed will provide the starting point for groups to dig out their own resources.

- Christians Facing Non-Christian Believers.

Kulandran, S., *Resurgent Religions*, London, Lutterworth Press, 1957, 32 p.

World Council of Churches, *Theology for Evangelism*, Geneva, May, 1958.

Anderson, Wilhelm, *Towards a Theology of Missions*, London, SCM Press Ltd., 1955, 64 p.

- Beliefs of Our Fellow Christians.

Bilheimer, Robert S., *The Quest for Christian Unity*, New York, Association Press, 1952, 181 p.

Stuber, S. I., *Denominations—How We Got Them*, New York, Association Press (Reflection Books, 1958), 127 p., 50c.

- The Lord's Supper and Inter-Communion.

Baillie, D., and Marsh, J., *Intercommunion* (Report of the Faith and Order Theology Commission), SCM Press, London, 1952.

World Council of Churches, Faith and Order Commission, "Rules and Customs of Churches Concerning Intercommunion and Open Communion" (Pamphlet No. 99), Geneva, 1944.

- Life and Work of Christians in Crises in Spain, Germany, East Europe, Africa, etc.

Build around presentations by returning travelers, supplemented by Herman, Stewart W., *Report from Christian Europe*, New York, Friendship Press, 1953, 211 p.

Tobias, Robert, *Communist Christian Encounter*, Indianapolis, School of Religion Press, 1956, 567 p.

Visser 't Hooft, W. A., "A Visit to the South African Churches," *The Ecumenical Review*, Geneva, January, 1953.

- Uniting the Churches Around the World.

Neill, Stephen, *Towards Church Union*, London, Camelot Press Ltd., 1952, 96 p.

World Council of Churches, *Six Ecumenical Surveys*, Evanston preparatory vol., Sec. I, Geneva, 1954.

Visser 't Hooft, *Renewal of the Church*, Philadelphia, Westminster Press, 1957, 128 p.

- Disciples and Their Hope for Union.
Tobias, Robert, ed., *Issues In Unity*, Indianapolis, Council on Christian Unity, 1958, 99 p.
Garrison, W. E., *Christian Unity and Disciples of Christ*, St. Louis, Bethany Press, 1955, 286 p.
- Purpose, Structure and Work of Our Ecumenical Organizations.
Write for descriptive pamphlets to:
World Council of Churches, 156 Fifth Avenue, New York 10, New York.
National Council of Churches, 297 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, New York.
International Missionary Council, 156 Fifth Avenue, New York 10, New York.
World Council of Christian Education, 156 Fifth Avenue, New York 10, New York.
World Student Christian Federation, 13 rue Jean Calvin, Geneva, Switzerland.
See also "Together," Council on Christian Unity, 222 South Downey, Indianapolis 7, Indiana.

For additional topics see Appendices II and III of this document.

Appendix II

PROJECTS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF ECUMENICAL STUDIES COUNCIL ON CHRISTIAN UNITY

BACKGROUND

The Council on Christian Unity was re-created* in 1910 to give impetus and body to Disciples' historic concern for Christian unity. This was to be done in three ways: 1) by visitations and exchanges with other Christians and communions; 2) by publication of Christian thought and opinion through an "ecumenical clearing house" journal; and 3) by publication and distribution of materials presenting the Disciples' position for Christian union.

From 1910 to 1954 the Council sponsored several hundred study conferences on Faith and Order issues and published several score of tracts, "open letters," monograms, books and reports of study commissions. Its best known publication was the *Christian Union Quarterly*, later changed to *Christendom* and more recently superseded by the World Council's *Ecumenical Review*.

In 1952 a Commission on Faith and Order, with Dr. Perry Gresham as chairman, was created to facilitate Disciples' active involvement in the rapidly developing work of the World Conference on Faith and Order (later, Department on Faith and Order of the World Council of Churches).

PRESENT PURPOSE

With the re-organization of the Disciples' Council in 1954 and the expansion of ecumenical studies both abroad and among Disciples, the Council's Faith and Order Commission became part of the Department of Ecumenical Studies. Added attention was to be

*In 1916 the Council, citing as its origin the "Christian Association of Washington" established by Thomas Campbell in 1809, changed its name to "Christian Association for the Promotion of Unity," later, the Association for the Promotion of Christian Unity.

given to our responsible participation in inter-denominational study activities.

COMPLETED PROJECTS

Completed projects of the Department have included the following:

1. Preparation and publication of Disciples' *Responses* to the Faith and Order Conference at Lund, Sweden, 1952; the Second Assembly of the World Council of Churches at Evanston, 1954; and the Faith and Order Conference at Oberlin, 1957.
2. Regional and national studies of the Greenwich Plan of Union, with recommendations for revision and further consideration.
3. Local church studies on "The Nature of the Unity We Seek" prior to the Oberlin Conference, under the direction of Dr. Howard Short.
4. Commentary to the World Council of Churches on its statement: "The Church, the Churches and the World Council of Churches."
5. Commentary to the World Council of Churches on the Statement of Basis of the World Council of Churches.
6. Completion of a report on "Proselytism and Christian Witness" by the Committee on Relations with Churches and Union Movements Abroad, Virgil Sly, chairman.
7. Completion of a report on the World Council's study, "The Lordship of Christ Over the World and the Church," by a commission of which Prof. William Moore is chairman.
8. Co-sponsor of Faith and Order Institutes at the Christian Theological Seminary, Indianapolis, 1957-58 and 1958-59, Ronald E. Osborn, initiator.

PRESENT PROJECTS

Active study commissions and projects include the following:

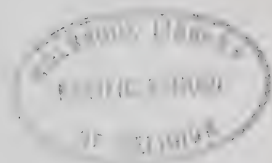
1. Commission on Baptism, Dean W. B. Blakemore, chairman.
2. Commission on Rapid Social Change, Prof. Walter W. Sikes, director.
3. Commission on the Theology of Missions, Prof. Joseph Smith, chairman.
4. Commission on Biblical Theology, Prof. William Reed, chairman.

5. Commission on The Meaning and Use of the Bible, Dr. W. A. Welsh, chairman.
6. Regional committees on ecclesiological-theological issues in North America.
7. Shared responsibility for 11 regional consultations on Christian unity, 1958-59.
8. Encouragement of local church studies as outlined in this document.

Assignments have been made for Disciple participation in several other World Council studies, including:

1. Institutionalism: Social and Cultural Factors Affecting Unity.
2. The Word of God and the Living Faiths of Men.
3. Tradition and Traditions.
4. Church and Society in Communist Lands.
5. The Mission of the Church to Workers.
6. Problem Surveys in Evangelism.
7. The Lord's Supper and Inter-Communion.
8. Confrontation of Various Confessions and the Confessional Point of View.

The Department has also been involved in a consultative capacity in the merger of national student Christian fellowships, and in the publication of the Council's *Ecumenical Studies Series*.



Appendix III

PROJECTS OF THE WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES And INTERNATIONAL MISSIONARY COUNCIL

The Division of Studies of the World Council of Churches was created at the Evanston Assembly in 1954. Its work is carried out in four departments: Department of Church and Society, Department of Missionary Studies, Department on Evangelism, and Department of Faith and Order. Several study projects are sponsored jointly by departments of the World Council and the International Missionary Council.

The following studies are presently in progress:

The Lordship of Christ over the World and the Church;
Christians and the Prevention of War in an Atomic Age;
Theological Education and the Training of the Ministry;
The Word of God and the Living Faiths of Men;
The Place and Use of the Bible in the Life of the Church;
The Word of God and the Church's Missionary Obedience;
Theology for Evangelism;
The Common Christian Responsibility Toward Areas of
Rapid Social Change;
Christ and the Church;
The One Baptism and the One Church;
Ways and Meaning of Worship;
Tradition and Traditions;
Social and Cultural Factors Affecting Unity;
Christian Witness, Proselytism and Religious Liberty.

Overall progress of the studies is reported in the following:

Division of Studies Bulletin (quarterly, World Council of Churches, Division of Studies, Geneva);

Background Information (occasional, Department on Church and Society, Geneva);

Laity (Bulletin of the Department on the Laity, Geneva) ;
Men and Women in Church and Society (Bulletin of the Department on Cooperation of Men and Women, Geneva) ;
Ecumenical Studies Series (Quarterly, Council on Christian Unity, Indianapolis).



ECUMENICAL STUDIES GUIDE

For Local Churches

Supplement I

THE 1959 STUDY

WHAT IS THE NATURE OF THE UNITY WE SEEK?

Ecumenical Studies Guide
for Local Churches
SUPPLEMENT I
The 1959 Study
What is the Nature of the Unity We Seek?

1959
AIMS OF THIS YEAR'S STUDY

What is the nature of the unity for which Disciples hope and work? The central aim of this year's study is to define that unity. It may prove to be the same unity for which our fathers have plead; it may, however, show alterations because of developments in our own and in other churches in this ecumenical age. Friendly study with other communions parallel to this study may help us see more clearly what that unity is for which we *should* hope.

Conclusions should be sought on these aspects of the larger theme:

1. What is *the nature* of the unity we seek: mutual recognition? cooperative action? corporate union?
What is the nature of unity, whether we seek it or not?
2. What is the *ground* of unity at the most fundamental dimension?
3. For what *reasons* are we concerned, and for what reason *should* we be concerned about unity?
4. What is the *shape* unity should take in terms of worship, church government, name, mission, etc.?
5. What is the *way* toward the best unity we can know, and what next steps can our congregation take?

1959

BASIC WORKING MATERIALS

1. Hunt, George L., *A Guide to Christian Unity*, St. Louis, Bethany, 1958, 96 p., \$1.00 (A study guide in 13 chapters with bibliography, questions, suggested projects. Based on the 1957 Oberlin Faith and Order Conference on "The Nature of the Unity We Seek").
2. Tobias, Robert, ed., *Issues in Unity*, Indianapolis, Council on Christian Unity, 1958, 99 p., 50c (Preparatory study materials for Disciples' consideration of their involvement in current issues in unity, with questions and bibliography).

Additional Materials.

3. Minear, Paul, ed., *The Nature of the Unity We Seek*, St. Louis, Bethany Press, 1958, 304 p., \$4.00 (Official report of the Oberlin Conference).
4. Nelson, J. Robert, *Christian Unity in North America*, St. Louis, Bethany Press, 1958, 208 p., \$3.50 (A symposium of preparatory materials for the Oberlin Conference).
5. Morrison, C. C., *The Unfinished Reformation*, New York, Harper and Bros., 1953, 236 p., \$3.00.
6. Garrison, W. E., *Christian Unity and Disciples of Christ*, St. Louis, Bethany, 1955, 286 p., \$3.00.
7. Garrison, W. E., *Quest and Character of a United Church*, New York, Abingdon, 1957, 238 p., \$3.50.

Other selected materials are listed in the basic working documents above and should be made accessible to the ecumenical study commission.

1959
THE QUESTIONNAIRE

This questionnaire is designed to help get an accurate picture of our present posture toward unity as a total Brotherhood. Data from local church study commissions will be combined with that from eleven area unity consultations in a composite report, with evaluation of findings and recommendations, and some projected next steps.

The Commission is urged to fill in the questionnaire at the beginning of its work, returning the completed questionnaire, together with other information on the Commission's work, when it has finished this year's study.

Please answer all questions.

Answers should represent what the Commission estimates to be the position of the congregation.

Where broad dissent is known, use per cent figures to indicate relative strength and add a note to indicate direction of change, if any.

In rating alternatives, 1, 2, 3 etc., 1 is highest rating.

-
1. Congregation. Name and place _____
 2. Membership _____.
 3. Percentage of membership originating in other communions _____. List main groups _____.
 4. Participation in councils of churches financially: Local ____; State ____; National ____; World ____.
 5. Has the minister already filled this questionnaire at one of the unity consultations? _____.
 6. (Rate 1, 2, 3, 4) The congregation's present concern for unity springs from
_____ the Disciples' tradition and historic plea;
_____ obedience to Biblical command to unite;
_____ concern for effective Christian action;

- _____ our understanding of the interdependent relationship God has given His creation.
7. (Check one) The congregation regards our broken relationship with other churches
 _____ as sin;
 _____ as unfortunate misunderstanding;
 _____ as providing healthy competition for the Lord's work.
8. (Check one) If as sin (above), whose sin,
 _____ the erring party to division only?
 _____ those who divided, but not their descendants?
 _____ those who divided and their descendants so long as there is division?
9. (Check one) Unity is achieved by compromise, good will and understanding.
 _____ Unity is given to those who are one with Christ, though they may not agree on all points.
 _____ Unity exists only "in truth" and therefore can come only after agreement on Biblical doctrine and practice.
10. Yes No Does your congregation believe that the kind of
 _____ unity our forefathers hoped for is realizable?
11. (Check one) The ultimate unity for which we now hope is
 _____ organic union, with all Christians gathered into one visible church with varieties of worship, program, order;
 _____ spiritual unity, with the various denominations mutually respecting one another and cooperating in councils, federations, etc.;
 _____ confessional unity, with like-minded denominations which agree on fundamentals of faith merged into world denominational bodies.
12. (Check one) The way to unity is
 _____ to find the true church and persuade everyone to join it;
 _____ for each church to re-shape its life after the New Testament way, and all will grow into one;

- _____ to recognize that no one has found the way, and seek together God's forgiveness and leading;
- _____ for the churches to create a body broad enough to comprehend all major communions, their varieties of worship, etc.;
- _____ to find a least common denominator of faith and practice, unite on that, adjusting agencies accordingly and allowing freedom of opinion on other matters.

13. (Check one) The Church is

- _____ the people of God called apart from the world to be redeemed;
- _____ the custodian of the divine authority and grace committed to the apostles and their successors;
- _____ the fellowship called into being by faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour;
- _____ where the Word of God is preached and the sacraments are rightly administered;
- _____ the community of those who have experienced new life in Jesus Christ;
- _____ a society of those who have joined together in their religious quest.

14. (Check any) The unity in the New Testament church which is restorable is

- _____ its doctrines;
- _____ its government and ministry;
- _____ its sacraments;
- _____ its relation to Christ.

15. Which of the following matters must be decided *before* and which may be left until *after* formal declaration of uniting? (Check "b" before, and "a" after.)

- _____ agreement on the person and work of Christ;
- _____ agreement on the basis of authority for Christians;
- _____ agreement on how and what members are added to the church;
- _____ agreement on frequency of the Lord's Supper;

- _____ agreement on meaning and practice of baptism;
 _____ agreement on pattern of local church govern-
 ment;
 _____ agreement on role of ministers;
 _____ agreement on who owns church property;
 _____ agreement on functions, constitutions, by-laws,
 etc., of mission and service agencies.
16. _____ Are you presently involved in conversations with
 Yes No any other congregation toward federation, mer-
 ger, community church, etc.?
17. _____ Do you feel you should be locally?
 Yes No (If "yes," with what group _____, and
 what is major hindrance? _____)
18. _____ Our Brotherhood should now prepare a state-
 Yes No ment of intent which would affirm our desire
 to be mutually part of other churches and sug-
 gest ways and means of so doing.
19. _____ Would the congregation participate with other
 Yes No communions in drafting an affirmation of faith
 if this seemed helpful in clarifying matters to-
 ward union?
20. _____ Would the congregation approve of merger in
 Yes No principle now with some group such as the
 United Church, assuming that some give and
 take and period of adjustment would be neces-
 sary?
21. _____ Does the congregation recognize membership in
 Yes No it as membership in the Church Universal?
22. _____ Does the congregation recognize Christians in
 Yes No other Protestant communions as members of the
 Church Universal and accept them as such in the
 local fellowship?
23. (Check each column) What is your present practice and what
 (Practice) (Accept) would you accept as minimal in trans-
 ferring members from churches which
 baptize infants or do not baptize at all?
 _____ confession and immersion?
 _____ letter and immersion?

_____ letter without immersion?

_____ personal statement only?

24. (Check one only) Do you regard baptism

_____ as a means of grace;

_____ as the fulfillment of a requirement for salvation;

_____ as an act of dedication to God;

_____ as a sign of acceptance into the church;

_____ as the response to and sign of God's continuing grace.

25. (Check one) Do you regard the Lord's Supper

_____ as a means of grace;

_____ as a memorial to Jesus' death;

_____ as a participation in the life and death of Christ.

26. (Check one) Baptism and the Lord's Supper are

_____ indispensable to salvation;

_____ indispensable to the ongoing of the church;

_____ important but not essential symbols of spiritual realities.

27. (Check one) Ordination

_____ concerns the local congregation only and bears the authority of the local congregation;

_____ concerns the whole Church Universal and should be carried out under auspices representative of the whole Church.

28. _____ If the congregation feels that representatives of
Yes No the Church Universal should be involved in ordination, should they also participate in verifying the qualifications of the candidate before the ordination service?

IDEA LIST
For
FOLLOW-UP PROJECTS
Of
THE ECUMENICAL STUDIES COMMISSION

- Draft a hypothetical plan or basis on which your congregation would be willing to consider union with another communion. Include some detail on church government, authority, ministry, sacraments, statement of faith, etc.
- Survey your community for present evidences of unity; define the nature of unity reflected therein. Project what more ought to be done in terms of new councils, cooperative work, joint enterprises, mergers, etc.
- Do an analysis and report on the story of unity and division in your own community—issues, advances, set-backs, etc., noting especially evidences of, and reasons for trends over the past fifteen years and present direction: mergers, divisions, new churches, dissolved churches, attitudes, etc. (See *Toward Christian Unity*, an analytical paper prepared by the Central Study Group of the Massachusetts Council of Churches, 1958; available, Massachusetts Council of Churches, 14 Beacon Street, Boston.)
- Sponsor a debate on why churches in your community ought (and ought not) to unite for spiritual, Biblical, etc., reasons.
- Do a study document with other churches on the minimal agreement in doctrine and faith necessary for full unity, and follow-up with joint studies in small groups.

FORM FOR REPORTING BACK

Church

Membership

Pastor

Members of Commission:

<i>Name</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>Profession</i>	<i>Church Responsibilities</i>
-------------	------------	-------------------	--------------------------------

How was study initiated?

Sessions held and main topic of each:

Main Points of Agreement:

Main Points of Disagreement:

New ideas or action projected:

What do you see as next steps re. unity in your community/congregation?

What do you see as next steps re. the Ecumenical Studies Commission?

Suggestions to the Council on Christian Unity re. next studies.

Pastor's comment on general tone of the Commission's work.

Attach any full report or statement from the Commission.